

Spring 5-10-2013

# Engagement Media - The Fusion of Journalism and Museum Experience Design

Brieonna L. Logsdon

Western Kentucky University, Brieonna.Logsdon624@topper.wku.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/stu\\_hon\\_theses](http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/stu_hon_theses)



Part of the [Film and Media Studies Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Logsdon, Brieonna L., "Engagement Media - The Fusion of Journalism and Museum Experience Design" (2013). *Honors College Capstone Experience/Thesis Projects*. Paper 410.  
[http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/stu\\_hon\\_theses/410](http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/stu_hon_theses/410)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors College Capstone Experience/Thesis Projects by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact [connie.foster@wku.edu](mailto:connie.foster@wku.edu).

ENGAGEMENT MEDIA—  
THE FUSION OF JOURNALISM AND MUSEUM EXPERIENCE DESIGN

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Bachelor of Arts with

Honors College Graduate Distinction at Western Kentucky University

By

Brieonna L. Logsdon

\*\*\*\*\*

Western Kentucky University  
2013

CE/T Committee:

Kerry J. Northrup, Advisor

Dr. Loup Langton

Professor Wolfgang Brauner

Approved by

---

Advisor

School of Journalism and Broadcasting



Copyright by  
Brieonna L. Logsdon  
2013

## ABSTRACT

News organizations struggle to find the balance between audience and content, but there are large amounts of untapped research in a field that would not often be compared to journalism — museum exhibit design.

Museums specifically study how to best engage an audience, to make them willing to leave their homes, buy tickets and return multiple times to see exhibits. What journalism can learn from museum engagement design may alter how newsrooms plan interaction and even their content.

Western iMedia, a student news operation at Western Kentucky University, gathered and formatted content based on these lessons from museum design. The story, “Inside Confucius,” documents multiple aspects about the Confucius Institute and its branches around the world in large news panels designed for maximum engagement. In a mixture of technology, storytelling and engagement design, the project was turned into a museum exhibit to explore the lessons learned from research and interviews.

The first part of this thesis is an article intended for the journalistic community. The second describes the process and findings for an academic audience.

Keywords: Journalism, Museum Design, Confucius Institute, Journalism Engagement, Museum Engagement Design

風向轉變時，有人築牆，有人造風車。

When the wind of change blows, some build walls, while others build windmills.

-Chinese Proverb

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank all those who made this project possible. I would like to thank my advisor, Kerry J. Northrup, for his support and partnership in this project. I would also like to thank the iMedia team for giving me the tools and support to make the exhibit possible. Without their hard work, this research would not have happened. Thank you to those who shared their time and knowledge with me, and who allowed me to ask a million questions. To Joanna Jenkins for sharing her research about Millennials, giving me focus on an audience. To Michael Brechner and the staff at the Frist, thank you for sharing your experience, resources and for being supportive of the project.

Thank you to the Student Research Council for awarding me a FUSE Grant for this project, which gave me the means to create this project, travel for research and present my findings in New York City.

And, of course, thank you to my family, friends and all those who supported me through this project. None of this would have happened without your influence.

## VITA

October 15, 1990..... Born – Louisville, Kentucky  
2009 ..... Our Lady of Mercy Academy,  
Louisville, Kentucky  
April 2012 ..... iMedia coverage INMA 2012 World Congress  
Los Angeles, California  
May 2012..... iMedia coverage Global Editor’s Network World Summit  
Paris, France  
August 2012 ..... Studied abroad fall semester  
Grantham, England  
September 2012 ..... Photographer at INMA European Conference  
December 2012 ..... Awarded FUSE Grant  
April 2013 ..... iMedia coverage INMA 2013 World Congress  
New York, New York  
2013 ..... Western Kentucky University,  
Bowling Green, Kentucky

## FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: News Editorial Journalism  
Minor Field: Creative Writing

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Vita.....	v
Chapters	
1. The Article .....	1
2. The Idea.....	11
3. Making It Happen .....	14
4. Lessons From Museum Design .....	19
5. Final Product.....	24
Bibliography.....	54

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE ARTICLE

#### **Lessons from the Gallery A Guide to Engagement for News Media**

In today's world where content comes in torrents, technology is always changing, and the only scarce resource is how much attention you can get from a multitasker. What counts in successful news media is engagement.

New studies show it is not about attracting millions of unique visitors or thousands of social media followers. It is not about the percentage of market households who had your channel on in the background while doing other things, or the number of print copies rolling off the press but never completely read. In this era of Big Data, big numbers really don't mean as much. We can tell now that the total time most people spend experiencing a piece of news is measured in partial minutes and seconds. They aren't really committing anything of themselves to the experience.

And it's the experience that matters and differentiates. When people can find pretty much the same news and information anywhere, it is the experience of how they got it that they'll remember and value.

It may seem obvious, yet most mass media don't seem to have gotten the memo about this shift in priorities from the mass to the media, or more specifically to the media experience. It may be worth consulting some of the real experts at designing experiences around content to see what they can teach us in the news business about doing a better job of engaging our public.

I'm talking about museums. There are some interesting commonalities.

Museums and news media have content and audiences. At some level they even have similar goals — to connect their audience with the content while making money, as both enterprises have considerable financial requirements.

It's interesting to note, however, how differently museums and news media approach accomplishing their goals. From a journalistic standpoint, there is something enviable about the way museums regard their patrons, almost a purity of purpose to which the average American news organization might aspire in how it treats its own public.

Both museums and news media certainly seek to attract the largest audiences they can.

But museums give the audience something for their time and attention, an experience of culture, knowledge and information. Lacking some sizable



philanthropic endowment, museums of course have financial designs on their visitors, wanting to get them to at least come back if not to become members and buy stuff in the gift shop.

American news organizations do not generally regard their readers or viewers or users as patrons as much as their primary commercial commodity to be gathered and packaged and sold to advertisers. That's on the business side.

On the journalistic side, I like to think we are similarly committed to the culture, knowledge and information values of our content.

But here's the difference: Most traditionally trained journalists have been taught to put the content itself above everything else including the public. Our ethos is that, after all, it's for the public's benefit that nothing trumps the story, even concerns about how to make the story more engaging, more of an experience. As soon as you let secondary considerations start driving the effort, you risk compromising editorial veracity.

Museums, one has to know, are just as staunchly committed to the integrity of their content, the art and artifacts entrusted to their keeping and exhibit. Yet museums put their emphasis on ensuring that people will successfully experience and engage with the content.

And it doesn't seem to hurt the content, or the museum. Museum attendance worldwide has increased every year for the past four or five, according to an annual survey by The Art Newspaper, while newspaper readership and network TV news viewership have steadily declined over the same period.

So what if you approached a news story like a museum exhibit? In fact, what if you made a news story into a museum-like experience so that people could physically as well as informationally explore, study and absorb it, with the goal of generating a much higher level of engagement than a typical news story? How would that work exactly?

That's what we set out to do over eight months from late 2012 into early 2013 with a news project called "Inside Confucius."

Journalistically, "Inside Confucius" is an international examination of the workings of the Chinese government's flagship cultural outreach and soft-power initiative called the Confucius Institute. The Confucius Institute is positioning thousands of teachers in local classrooms all over the world to teach Mandarin and spread Chinese culture to schoolchildren. The story is a powerful draw from the standpoints of children, educational standards and funding, politics and soft power, human interest in the visiting teachers, global interest in understanding China, and the complexities of international associations.

Technologically, “Inside Confucius” was designed from the start to prototype the application and combination (dare I say, the convergence) of several highly attractive storytelling formats. These include data visualization, augmented reality video, mobile and tablet adaptiveness and interactive long-form narrative styles. It has also employed crowd-sourcing and the latest social media techniques. The goal of all this has been to make the story more visual, more tangible, more accessible to a contemporary audience — in short, to generate a high level of engagement. People are intended to run their hands through this story, not just brush past it.

Then experientially, “Inside Confucius” is being physically presented to people using museum techniques of exhibition display and lighting, tiered signage, synchronized literature, visual and tactile interactivity, and promotion. It is a news story in the form of an experience. Simply by visiting the exhibit, people will be making a more significant engagement with the story than they ever would by just reading it or watching a video. Of course, there is also a responsive website where people can do just that.

The process of putting together “Inside Confucius” has easily matched the level of complexity and work required of any major editorial exposé by any traditional mainstream news organization. Dozens of people blending a wide range of reporting, storytelling and design skills were required. Most were fusion journalists trained in the Western iMedia entrepreneurial startup embedded in Western Kentucky University’s School of Journalism and Broadcasting.

The process identified five best practices that news media can borrow from museums and other experience designers to increase and improve engagement around news content.

1. **Plan the story experience, not just the story** — The *Manual of Museum Exhibitions* lists five phases in the design process. The first is the creation of an interpretive plan in which the curator considers the “intended visitor experience” as much as the possibilities of each component itself. The comparable step in a news organization is putting engagement plans on the story budget along with deadlines, video, social media and all the other things we talk about in our news meetings.
2. **Put a storyteller in charge, not a techie** — Museums don’t just collect the art then turn it over to their IT departments to create the experience for visitors. News organizations shouldn’t just hand engagement responsibility over to their digital desks. It’s not about the technology or even just the content. It all has to play together to make for a truly engaging experience. Raju Narisetti, senior vice president and deputy head of strategy at News Corp, asked “What is a journalism experience?” and answered that it is words, pictures, charts, sounds, slide shows, interactive graphics, databases and video. News organizations know the variety of engagement options, but pulling them together is a challenge. Narisetti said, “You cannot leave it to the IT

department to deliver an engagement experience.”

3. **Give power to the people** — Have you ever walked back to an earlier room in a museum exhibit to look at something again? Or have to decide which of several side rooms you would visit first? Once you’re inside an exhibit, you’re in charge. Your decisions become part of the experience. Each choice you make invests you a little more personally in the environment. It’s classic engagement. Michael Brechner, design and operations director at the Frist Center for Visual Arts in Nashville, Tenn., said it best: “Exhibition design begins with the art and ends with the visitor.” To be like a museum exhibit, then, the news experience should be as non-linear as possible and provide multiple points of entry.
  
4. **Use tiered content** — Look closely at the little information placards next to a piece of art in a museum and you might notice something about how the information is structured. There are usually just one or two lines of title and label at the top, followed by a brief conversational paragraph, followed by a longer section of expert detail. This tiered content model allows people to decide how deeply they want to dive into all the information that is available without making them feel badly about not reading it all, which could lead to them giving up on the exhibit. Saul Carliner wrote *Lessons Learned from Museum Exhibit Design* to draw connections between web design and museum design. Carliner writes that “as exhibit designers layer content so visitors can

choose a desired level of complexity, so interface designers can create layered interfaces to match users' experience levels and layered help systems to match users' appetite for information."

5. **Give people a real experience and a reward** — Heavy science lies behind experience and engagement design, grounded in deep studies of human motivation and psychology. Museum exhibit designers are often schooled in these arts. News managers usually aren't. In layman's terms, though, it's simple: It isn't much of an experience if it's something they do all the time. To be worthy of the term, a news experience needs to be special somehow. And when people have gone to the effort to engage with your story, they want to feel a sense of accomplishment, some reward or gratification. Engagement design researchers Christian Dindler and Ole Sejer Iversen at the University of Aarhus in Denmark wrote that the "goal is to create strong links between the museum and the everyday life of the visitor. You must understand the structures of motivation to understand how to fully engage the visitor."

In the end, what you want to do is increase your engagement coefficient.

You calculate that first by tracking the number of people who actually do something with your story rather than just giving it a glance and moving on. They dwelled, they clicked, they watched, they listened, they played, they bookmarked, they liked, they tweeted, they retreated, they reposted, they favorited, they shared, they pinned, they

emailed, they commented, they uploaded, they downloaded, they came back, they came back again, they subscribed, they looked something up, they gave feedback, they contributed, they followed a link, they voted, they asked a question, they called, they visited, maybe they even sent a letter. Somehow, they gave something of themselves.

Now divide that number by the total number of people who touched the content in any way. That's the story's engagement coefficient.

You'd have a coefficient of 1 in a perfect world. The more the coefficient reduces down to some disappearing digits behind the decimal point, the worse off you're doing in creating a meaningful experience for people.

Tracking improvement is important. But the really valuable part of this metric is that you'll have to sit down and consider what actually constitutes solid engagement with your public, what rewards you're offering, and then how you can engineer those opportunities for people.

As with most things, it's about mindset. Raju Narisetti told the Digital Media Strategies 2013 Conference that "most big news rooms have focused on creating great content, and thinking the audience will come and hopefully they'll pay. But having great content is no longer enough – everybody gets the same news. The

experience the audience is getting from the content is what will differentiate us from competition and all experience only come at intersection of content and tech.”

Applying what we can learn from museum engagement design can help us reach that intersection, create an experience for the public and form a relationship that can be measured with the engagement coefficient.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE IDEA

Western iMedia is a group of students lead by Kerry J. Northrup, the Turner Multimedia Professor and a professional in residence at Western Kentucky University. In iMedia, the students form a multiplatform news team for a semester. The students themselves are from different disciplines within the School of Journalism & Broadcasting.

In the fall semester of 2012, iMedia began gathering information for an in-depth look at the Confucius Institutes around the world in a multifaceted story called “Inside Confucius.” The Confucius Institutes promote Chinese language and culture by sending teachers to countries around the globe. It is somewhat controversial because the program is largely funded by the Chinese government. The team conducted interviews around the world about the structure of the Confucius Institute, its mission and other newsworthy elements. The goal was to create a series of interactive infographic banners called news panels to engage an audience, taking interaction beyond reading a story and encouraging more engagement with a story. The news panels are an attractive medium within themselves. They are low tech, which means the public does not need technology to absorb the basics of the story.

They can understand the story from the art, quotes and data on the panel. Adding technology helps turn the news story into an experience. Using a technology called Layar, a viewer can hold his or her smartphone up to the news panel and pictures become video, graphics move and audience engagement is instantly increased. A news story can be told anywhere these panels are displayed, whether online, at the mall, or in an exhibit. Most importantly, they create engagement.

The idea to turn these news panels into an exhibit was a logical next step to measure how an audience engages with a story. We wanted to engineer an entire space to create engagement, and turn multiple parts of a story into a large experience. In a museum-like space, the similarities between museums and news become obvious. Both design with an audience in mind. Museum exhibits must convince an audience to leave the comforts of home, drive to the museum, buy a ticket and give up hours of free time. Most news organizations ask that readers spend time on their website or buy a paper. What are museums doing that made them so successful? They design an *experience* for their audience.

News is no longer about distributing the news faster than everyone else. Content is no longer the only king. The goal of every news organization needs to be audience engagement, but no one is quite sure how to achieve it. Technology and the shifting desires of an audience make it impossible to create a formula for success. The shared experience of reading a newspaper and discussing it with coworkers or family dissolved with the explosion of technology. News organizations inherently created an

audience experience when newspapers were the most widely circulated news source. Success could be measured on how many newspapers were sold.

Organizations now sit on mounds of data about page views, tweets and comments, unsure of what it means for their relationship with the reader.

## CHAPTER THREE

### MAKING IT HAPPEN

Initial research for the exhibit began with delving into the world of engagement design. I searched for articles to draw connections between the goals of museums and news organizations. There is a large number of resources for museum engagement design study. There are not as many sources about news reader engagement. I was put in contact with Joanna Jenkins in Washington, D.C., who worked on a study about Millennials' engagement in news via technology, which I used as a basis for the target audience of the exhibit.

I contacted and visited Michael Brechner, design and operations director at the Frist Center for Visual Arts in Nashville, Tenn. He gave me a book about museum engagement design and documents they use at the Frist when planning an exhibit about the process and implementation of an exhibit. He walked me through the exhibits at the Frist and explained exactly why they chose placement and how they determined which extra elements to add. He also answered my many questions. Visiting with Brechner gave me insight into how a museum designer thought, and the processes surrounding engagement design.

After researching the steps of the museum design process, I began to consider the elements that would be in the space. The first step in museum design is to consider the content, its purpose and ways to engage an audience.

The nine news panels were made interactive with an augmented reality technology called Layar from a company based in Amsterdam, Netherland. After downloading the Layar app, a reader holds up a smartphone or tablet to the panel and pieces of the information become interactive. Pictures become video, charts can be updated with the latest information — the panel is not limited by the information printed on it.

Augmented reality has been a pie-in-the-sky technology for many years but more a tech experience than a serious content tool. This is because most implementations were limited in functionality and complex to set up. Earlier iMedia teams had evaluated various AR systems to try to find one that was both dependable enough and simple enough for an average journalist to use. Layar's system, launched and rebranded during the summer of 2012, was the first to rise to these standards. Northrup reached out to Layar's CEO to develop an initial relationship with the company and then identified a potential editorial project about the Confucius Institute as a possible platform where it could be used to tell the story more effectively.

The nine news panels guide visitors through the story content. The first panel introduces the project and the technology. It explains how to use Layar and acts as a

test-run before entering the full exhibit. The next seven panels give insight into the program through an overview of the program, called “China,” a look into global impact in “World,” an exploration of soft power and the politics surrounding the program in “Politics,” a closer look at the Confucius Institutes locally in the “United States” panel, an insight into the stories of visiting teachers in “Teachers,” and a look into classrooms in the “Student” panel. The final panel, “Story,” acts as a project overview and thanks those who helped make the project possible.

We also had to consider what other elements would be in the space that would aid the story told on the panels. We asked visiting teachers from WKU’s Confucius Institute to spend a few hours a day in the exhibit to answer questions, teach lessons and give visitors the feeling they are in a classroom. We placed this station near the ‘Teacher’ panel. We also created a classroom area for visitors to watch video of a Chinese classroom, giving them insight into what it is really like in a Chinese class from a student’s point-of-view. We placed this area near the ‘Student’ panel. A computer station allowed visitors to access the website and take a poll to give us a better sense of how engaged they were as an audience. The responsive website allowed the reader to engage in telling their own Confucius Institute story, as well as view the panels, read the long-form stories and watch extra video and other content.

Information and video gathering for the story took place in the fall 2012 semester. In January 2013, the iMedia team came together to turn all of the raw interview footage into short pieces for the banners and to write longer pieces for the website. A

challenge the team had to overcome was turnover from one semester to the next.

Many of the team that gathered information during the fall semester could not return to the team. All but one of the writers on the spring team were new to the story.

Another challenge to the project was the design of news panels. These panels were not envisioned as traditional infographic charts; they needed to be as artistic as they were informative. iMedia made arrangements made with Column5, a design company specializing in infographics based in Newport Beach, California. These arrangements fell through, however, leaving us with very little time to make the posters. C5 does excellent work designing infographics, but we learned that we needed to present infographics in a more artistic and engaging way. We commissioned help from a student graphic designer, Alan Schneller, to help combine art and information in our panels. Having a designer who specialized in art helped us create panels that were balanced in the way we needed them, visually and informationally, to create a high level of engagement.

Finding a location for the exhibit was difficult. Most galleries on WKU's campus are reserved for student art near the end of the semester, or are booked a semester in advance. Excellent timing and a little luck lead us to the Kentucky Museum, which would have time in between exhibits to allow "Inside Confucius" to be on display for three weeks, from April 22 to May 12. While we were happy with the space itself in the Kentucky Museum, we could not control and change their space to fully fit our needs. We planned to have elements of the story in the middle of the space, but could

not since there were events planned during the time our exhibit was on display.

Unlike many exhibits, we could not change the physical space, such as the color or placement of walls, because it belonged to the Kentucky Museum and it was not in our budget.

Time was the biggest enemy. I studied abroad in the fall semester, which is when I approached Kerry about working on a project, so I unfortunately missed months I could have been planning and researching. We also lost time when we had to find a new designer. Lack of time also meant I could not create some elements I would have liked, such as invitation mailers for the opening and guidebooks for the exhibit.

Budget would have also put a constraint on these elements. Despite the challenges, the team and I were flexible, ready to solve the next problem.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### LESSONS FROM MUSEUM DESIGN

In volume II of his 2012 Clip Report, titled "The Continental Content Divide," public relations executive Steve Rubel notes that news media are diverging into two camps — essentially those banking on quantity of content and social networks to draw in the largest possible number of eyeballs, and those that "believe the future is in immersive experiences that audiences seek out and, perhaps, even pay for."

The biggest lesson from my research and putting this project together was the concept of a new metric to measure audience engagement in news, because the number of times a page has been viewed and the amount of time a reader spends on an article does not really tell us how engaged the audience is. The goal of news organizations should be to increase their engagement coefficient, a term that describes the number of readers who invest in the story divided by the number readers who simply interact with the story. That ideal ratio should equal 1.

Organizations need to increase their investment quotient, the amount of readers who connect with the content beyond reading and commenting. They need to become a part of readers' everyday lives. News should begin with the content and end with the reader. Michael Brechner, design and operations director at the Frist Museum in

Nashville, Tenn., said it best: “Exhibition design begins with the art and ends with the visitor.” Ending with the visitor is what turns a news story into an experience.

Museum design offers a field of research about turning content into an experience.

The *Manual of Museum Exhibitions* lists five phases in the design process. The first phase is the creation of an ‘interpretive plan’, in which the curator considers the ‘intended visitor experience’ as much as the possibilities of each component itself. In museum design, considering audience engagement is one of the first steps to creating an exhibit. News rooms need to consider who is in the curator’s role in news, considering audience engagement and the development of content at the same time. Curation in this reference is different from the term ‘media curation’ that is prominent in the journalism industry now, which refers to aggregating news from different sources and sorting, categorizing and presenting it on another platform. News curation in this sense is more like the role of a museum curator, who oversees content and helps interpret it to create an experience.

Raju Narisetti asked ‘What is a journalism experience?’ and answered that it is words, pictures, charts, sounds, slide shows, interactive graphics, databases and video. News organizations know the variety of engagement options, but pulling them together is a challenge. Narisetti said ‘you cannot leave it to the IT department to deliver an engagement experience.’ That is where a curator in news is needed: to deliver an engagement experience to the public designed from the very beginning of content creation.

Another lesson journalists can learn from museum design is to give the public more control over news consumption. In museums, an audience can walk back and forth between pieces of art or skip a room entirely. Saul Carliner wrote *Lessons Learned from Museum Exhibit Design* to draw connections between web design and museum design. Carliner writes that “as exhibit designers layer content so visitors can choose a desired level of complexity, so interface designers can create layered interfaces to match users’ experience levels and layered help systems to match users’ appetite for information.” The ‘interfaces’ Carliner mentions are the storytelling tools we have available in today’s technological age. *Lessons Learned* was written 13 years ago, but is relevant to story design today, though the platforms have dramatically changed. Creating multiple points of entry into a story will allow the public to engage in the story on their own terms. This increases an experience within a news story and strengthens the relationship between newsroom and audience.

Journalism usually uses an inverted pyramid style of presenting a story, with the most important facts at the top of a story and less important information as it continues. Museums often use a sectioned tiered model to give information to visitors. The first tier is only the most important information, such as the name of the artist and title of the piece. The next tier presents more important information, but it is not necessary to understanding the artwork or story. The last tier is for those who are extremely interested in every detail about the artwork, time period in which it was made or the artist’s life. Sometimes, the whole exhibit is created with this

tiered model, with bigger sections of information to give a sense of overall understanding, down to the small bits of information next to every piece in the exhibit. Instead of being concerned that readers lose interest after the first few paragraphs in journalism, we should give them tiered levels of information. We can suggest the point where they stop reading, so they can engage as much as they want without feeling as if they need to read the whole article to feel engaged.

In their article about museum engagement design, Christian Dindler and Ole Sejer Iversen wrote that “Engagement is a situational phenomenon that occurs in the interplay between visitors and the exhibition space, but it is also very much rooted in the visitors’ prior experiences, knowledge and preferences.” Creating a sense of relationship between the visitor and exhibit is what makes museum engagement unique, and should be applied to news engagement. The goal of newsrooms should be to create a relationship with the public, and help them create relationships with each other.

In a museum setting, designers try to plan a system of natural goals and rewards. Exhibits that offer goals are more engaging. The goal can be as simple as following a timeline or more complicated, such as putting a puzzle together to reveal an artistic image. The reward is often the completion of a challenge, but more successful rewards are social and engaging. What newsrooms can learn from this is that it is not an experience if it is something the audience does all of the time. Dindler and Iversen wrote that the “goal is to create strong links between the museum and the everyday

life of the visitor. You must understand the structures of motivation to understand how to fully engage visitor.” Human motivation determines how involved someone will be with your story, and it goes much deeper than your website design, or what technology you use. You cannot use technology alone to increase engagement. You must understand how users interact with your content and how they have been trained to interact through their past experiences.

The public is, by nature, looking to have an experience in which they create relationships. Newsrooms should consider human motivation along with these other lessons from museum engagement design as soon as they plan content for a story. This is what will differentiate newsrooms from bloggers, tweeters and other sources of news, which, because of technology, is now everyone on Earth.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE FINAL PRODUCT

#### Presentation/Lessons from INMA World Congress

While at the INMA 2013 World Congress with the iMedia team, I presented my topic through DTI, Digital Technological International, based in Utah. The common theme of the presentations at the World Congress was very much centered on engagement.

Ekstra Bladet-Politiken is a Danish company with more than 100 years of history.

Anders Ovesen, head of mobile sales for the company, said the company gives various ways for users to interact and use different means to motivate them, especially through advertising, which helps them fund content development. Grzegorz Piechota, head of news at Gazeta Wyborcza in Poland, said that news is an experience. To create this experience, a journalist in Poland documents his adventures and has created a fan base. Piechota said that creating individual brands within one company is not a bad thing, because it creates higher engagement and higher usage.

Engagement is a heavy topic of conversation in the journalism world currently, and this project is part of the discussion.

## SPECIAL REPORT

# Inside Confucius

走进孔院

Reported by WESTERN iMEDIA

The Confucius Institute is the Chinese government's flagship cultural outreach program. It is putting thousands of volunteer teachers in local classrooms all over the world to teach Mandarin, to spread the country's rich culture and to influence China's image with the next generation of global decisionmakers.

Reported & produced by the fusion journalists of Western Kentucky University's School of Journalism & Mass Communication

**故事**

**This is a news story, in the form of an experience.**

Some 28 specially trained fusion journalists from Western Kentucky University worked variously over a year to report this story and develop the techniques to present it. The goal is to engage people in the story more thoroughly than do traditional media formats.

**News panels and storyboards**  
Combining data visualization, art and illustration to attract people and tell the basic story through facts, stats, maps, text and images.

**Augmented-reality video overlay**  
Seen with an app on your own smartphone or tablet when it is focused on the panels, adding depth, context, emotion and interactivity.

**Museum experience design**  
Used to create an engagement environment around the journalistic content and add encounters such as actual visiting teachers.

**How it works**

**Try it here**

**wkujournalism.com/insideconfucius**  
An adaptive mobile site lets anyone access the project over any device, and contribute his or her own Confucius Institute story.

**12 months**  
Research, reporting, technology evaluation, design, production

**9 Confucius Institutes**  
WKU, Xavier, UK, UCLA, Maryland, London, SoE, LSU, Cape Town, BLCU

**23 interviews**

**19,242 words**

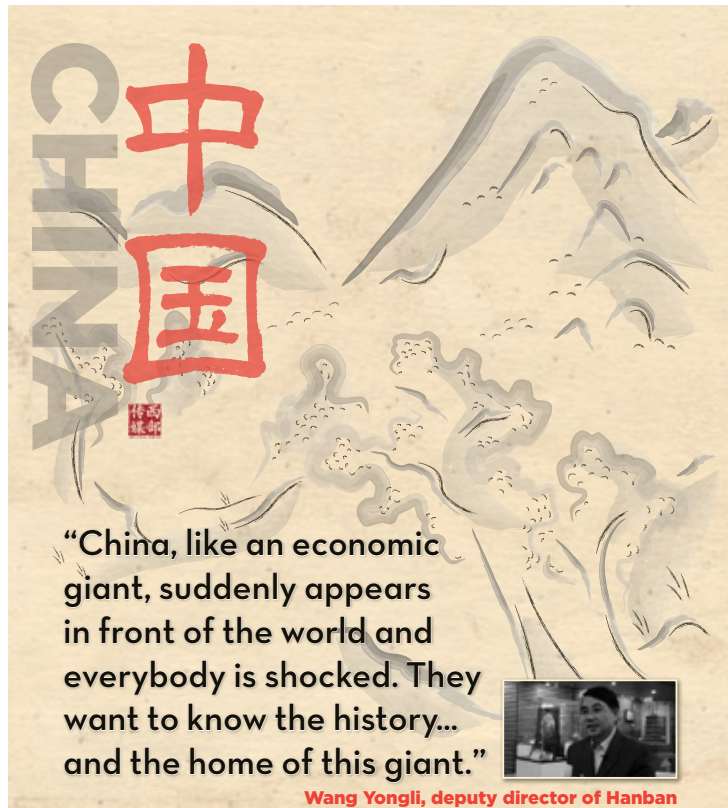
**1,086 emails**

**70 hours of video**

**4 continents**  
North America, Europe, Africa, Asia

**12,000 lines of code**

© 2013 Western Kentucky University



“China, like an economic giant, suddenly appears in front of the world and everybody is shocked. They want to know the history... and the home of this giant.”

**Wang Yongli, deputy director of Hanban**

#### WORKING TOGETHER

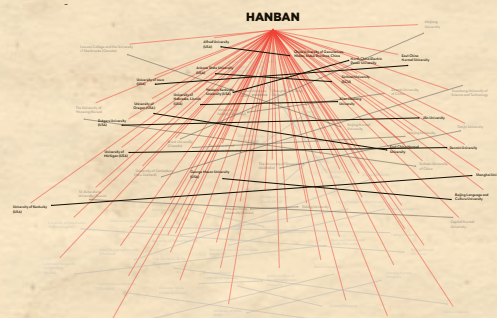


#### Yu Liu

Yu Liu is a Chinese native and graduate student associated with the Confucius Institute at the London School of Economics, which is one of the program's business-focused centers. As part of her studies, she tutors high-profile business professionals from London's bustling economic sector in Chinese for business dealings.

#### TRIANGLE CORPORATIONS

While some governments' intercultural programs draft agreements at the nation state level, China works directly with individual universities in each country. A typical Confucius Institute arrangement is described as a triangle corporation. Every local host university with a branch of the Confucius Institute is paired with a specific Chinese partner university, coordinating through the program's Hanban headquarters. Here is a representative selection of the triangle corporations now involving more than 420 schools around the globe.



#### THREE STYLES OF CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES



**Research-based institute**  
These programs operate outside of the classroom and often involve a more specific subject of study – such as Chinese business practices.

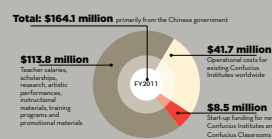


**Classroom-based institute**  
In these programs, language is key. All teaching centers operate communicating in Mandarin.



**Culture-based institute**  
Instead of language, these focus on spreading traditional Chinese music, Kung fu and traditional practices.

#### FUNDING FOR CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE WORLDWIDE





# CHINA

## Confucius Institute called

“the people of China’s commitment to the world”

Drawing its name from the ancient Chinese philosopher who emphasized government morality, sincerity, family loyalty and ancestor worship, the Confucius Institute is one of China’s primary efforts to strike a chord with the rest of the world. Its hundreds of language training and cultural exchange programs in more than 100 countries have little to do with the actual teachings of Confucius, but rather with his popularity abroad. He is one of the few universally well-known Chinese historical figures outside of Asia, and his teachings have broad appeal.

This section of “Inside Confucius” explains how China’s Confucius Institute is organized and how it works. It describes different forms the program can take, such as the Confucius Classroom foreign language classes in local schools using visiting Chinese teachers, and the research-based institutes that endow professors in cooperation with local universities. It is an essential foundation for the rest of the story.

While a lot of this information can be gathered from a variety of reference sources, journalists seek to make their reports more human, less sterile, by interviewing key people who can explain the nuances and answer questions. From the start of this project in the fall of 2012, that was Western iMedia’s approach. We particularly wanted the chance to interview a senior official of Hanban – the Confucius Institute headquarters in Beijing.

Then in mid-October, the American ABC News network broadcast a story on the Confucius Institute in Macon, Ga., that publicized some teaching materials unflattering to the United States. It was a minor controversy but Hanban started declining interview requests from any media for a while after that.

Our last chance would come in January 2013 when one of our iMedia teams traveled to Beijing to profile the training program that prepares visiting teachers to work around the world. With Hanban’s offices just down the road, they also requested an interview but arrived in China without any confirmation. And then at the last moment, Wang Yongli, deputy director of Hanban and the Office of Chinese Language Council International, opened his door to us and hugely expanded the story. One of his quotes became the headline for this storyboard.

Launch the Layar app, available free at [get.layar.com](http://get.layar.com).  
Point your phone or tablet camera  
at the news panel to view video and other  
augmented reality parts of this report.



# 世界 WORLD

"In past years, we and our partners focused more on opening up classes to teach Chinese language, but in the future, we hope we'll put more effort into introducing culture to each other for more cultural exchanges."

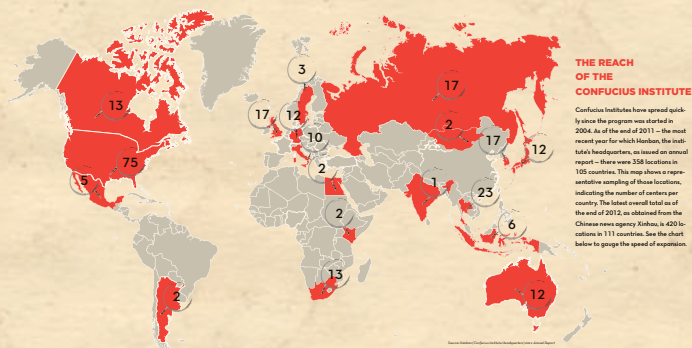
**Xu Lin, director general of Hanban**

## PERSPECTIVE ON HAVING GLOBAL REACH



### Lara Martin

The deputy director for the Confucius Institute for Traditional Chinese Medicine at London South Bank University, UK, she was previously director of the International Office there. She was the first representative from the United Kingdom to work with the Confucius Institute program.

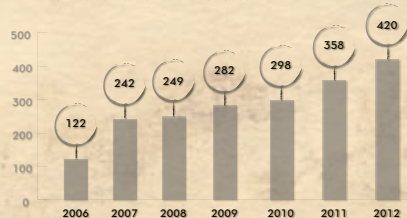


## HANBAN'S ANNOUNCED TARGETS

**1.5 million**  
Target for registered students by 2015

**500**  
Target for number of locations by 2020

## CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE'S RATE OF GROWTH



# WORLD

## The reach of the Confucius Institute has increased dramatically in less than a decade

Since establishing its first international language instruction center in Seoul, South Korea, in November 2004, China's cultural outreach program has expanded at an astounding rate. On average, one new Confucius Institute has been opened every week of the past eight years. Such a pace signals both urgency and importance. While observers suggest that China's placement of institutes is strategic for political and fiscal reasons, it is clear that the country has become a prominent economic power and that its officials view the spread of their language and culture as critical to being understood by the rest of the world.

In profiling the global reach and expansion of the Confucius Institute, Western iMedia staff found themselves challenged to keep up with the organization as it grew literally before our eyes and constantly made our information out of date. We had no appreciation at the start for how dynamic the program is.

For example, one of the first out-of-state reporting efforts our media teams made was to New Orleans in mid-October 2012 to cover the opening of the newest Confucius Institute in the United States, at Xavier University of Louisiana. Our intention was to eventually contrast the newest location with the oldest (see the United States news panel). But by the time "Inside Confucius" was to be presented in 2013, Xavier was already a long way from being the newest anymore. Just in the week leading up to the project's initial news engagement exhibit, Xu Lin, chief executive of Confucius Institute Headquarters and director-general of Hanban, was in the United States to preside over four more openings. Such constant change makes it difficult to get accurate figures for the size of the organization at any point in time more recent than a year past.

As of the end of 2012, there were more than 400 locations in 108 countries, according to the state-owned China Daily newspaper. China's Xinhua news agency has quoted the head of the program saying there will be branches in nearly 500 large cities across the world and 1.5 million registered students by 2020.

Launch the Layar app, available free at [get.layar.com](http://get.layar.com).  
Point your phone or tablet camera  
at the news panel to view video and other  
augmented reality parts of this report.



# POLITICS

## 政治

"Chinese people have different opinions (on the Confucius Institute) as well. They say, 'China is still a developing country. There is starvation, poverty.'...(Yet) we believe this is better for the whole world, better for our country to deal with a good relationship with our friends."

**Wang Yongli, deputy director of Hanban**

### NO PROBLEMS, NO COMPLAINTS



#### Ben Kemplin

Despite seeing criticism of the Confucius Institute on the news, this principal of Olmstead Elementary in Olmstead, Ky., said the volunteer teachers at his school display warmth, kindness and a love for teaching and for sharing their culture with students.



#### Casey Janes

The principal of Logan County High School in Russellville, Ky., said he hasn't received complaints from the community about having a Chinese teacher at his school. He said parents understand learning Chinese will help their children learn more about the world and eventually give them an edge over other job seekers in the future.



#### Susan Pertel Jain

The executive director for the UCLA Confucius Institute acknowledges that universities should always be mindful of who funds their programs, but said the Confucius Institute is aligned with U.S. initiatives. She said Washington is pushing for students to learn Chinese, among other languages, and the Confucius Institute helps reach that goal.

### SOFT-POWER COMPARISONS

CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE	Global Reach	Relations	Expansion	Ambassadors	Funding
China language-centered approach	Both the Confucius Institute and the Fulbright Program were created to project their country's culture. The United States started Fulbright shortly after World War II. The Chinese Hanban introduced the Confucius Institute in 2004. The philosophy of both organizations is to create a cross-cultural exchange throughout the world.	Implements a state-to-university agreement, giving the program significant sway over the activities of schools across the world.	Since its start in 2004, the program has expanded rapidly. Currently has 420 locations in 111 countries.	Primarily sends Chinese teachers abroad to instruct non-native speakers in language, culture and other topics.	Locations are initially supported financially but are expected to eventually operate independently. Total Confucius Institute budget in 2011 was \$164.1 million.
FULBRIGHT PROGRAM	U.S. culture-centered approach	Sets bilateral agreements between governments. In this model, host countries help make decisions regarding policies and candidates that will operate within their borders.	Founded after World War II to foster good relations between allies, Confucius Institute has surpassed Fulbright in the number of locations, but Fulbright is represented in 155 countries.	Sends both U.S. scholars and students around the world, and brings in scholars and students from other countries to live and work in the United States.	Financed by an annual appropriation from Congress via the U.S. State Department. In 2011, the program was allotted \$237.4 million.

#### PEW SURVEY U.S. ATTITUDES TOWARD CHINA

**66%** View China as a competitor  
**16%** View China as a partner

#### PEW SURVEY CHINESE ATTITUDES TOWARD U.S.

**39%** View U.S. as cooperative  
**26%** View U.S. as hostile

# POLITICS

## China did not invent the soft-power game but is now a world-class player with the Confucius Institute

The Confucius Institute has its critics both abroad and at home. Overseas, they worry about political strings attached to the money and resources provided directly to cooperative foreign universities. In China, there are occasional complaints about how much is being spent to export Chinese language and culture to create a positive world image, a category of influence called soft power. None of it has slowed the effort's growth. The 10-year-old program now ranks in size, scope and budget alongside the educational and cultural exchange initiatives of other world powers, though is still smaller than the acknowledged gold standard in this category – the United States' Fulbright Program.

Soft power is described as the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment. The term was coined a quarter century ago by a Harvard political science professor and is considered a desirable political strategy, especially compared to the use or threat of force. The language and cultural programs of many world powers including France's Alliance Française, Germany's Goethe-Institut, the United Kingdom's British Council and the U.S. Fulbright Program, are often openly referred to as soft power initiatives. It's only when Chinese soft power is referenced that the connotation tends to be more negative, due to the nature of China's political system compared to the other countries.

Western iMedia's journalists went into this project very aware of the controversial aspects of the Confucius Institute. We were determined not to ignore it but also not to overplay it depending on what we found in our interviews with people in four countries and at dozens of institute locations. Despite repeated probing, very few people had any opinion on the issue. Those who did – including the mayor of New Orleans, some Confucius Institute students at the London School of Economics, and a school administrator in Franklin County, Ky. – said the language learning aspects of the program far outweighed any concerns. The Hanban headquarters deputy director was more open than anyone else in addressing allegations of spying and interfering with universities' academic freedom. His comments are included in articles on the project's mobile site.

Launch the Layar app, available free at [get.layar.com](http://get.layar.com).  
Point your phone or tablet camera  
at the news panel to view video and other  
augmented reality parts of this report.





美国

UNITED STATES



“China is no longer an elective course. It’s really core curriculum.”

**Stephen A. Schwarzman, chairman and CEO of Blackstone Group private equity, announcing a \$300 million endowment for a Rhodes Scholar-style program with China**

#### BROADENING THE DISCUSSION



**Susan Pertel Jain**

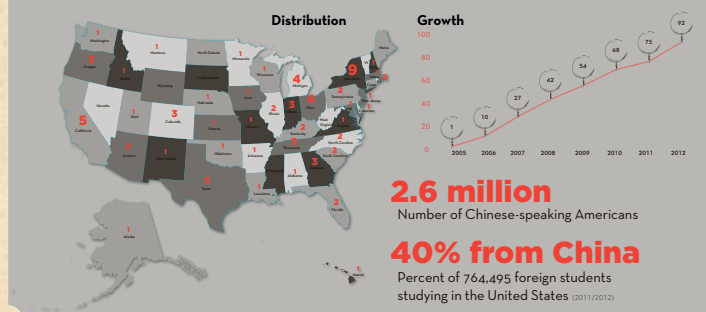
The executive director for the UCLA Confucius Institute said the program in the United States opens up a broader dialogue across the country on how to effectively teach the Chinese language.



**David Ward**

The principal of Auburn Elementary School in Auburn, Ky, said bringing in teachers from China through the Confucius Institute helps widen his students’ views of the world.

#### CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES



# UNITED STATES

## China makes U.S. the primary focus of its Confucius Institute cultural outreach efforts

According to the latest numbers, nearly a quarter of all of China's 420 Confucius Institutes are located in the United States. It is the largest single concentration in any of the 111 countries hosting the language and cultural exchange program. Beijing wants them there to seed good U.S.-China relations going forward. American officials might share that motivation, but it is American educators who have embraced the program and made Chinese the fastest growing foreign language offering in the nation's schools.

"Complex" is the word most experts use to describe the relationship between the United States and China. Based on Western iMedia's reporting, it is also a good word to characterize America's reception of the Confucius Institute – complex, yet mostly positive.

At a time of increased pressure on school budgets and instructional standards, supporters value the program's encouragement and facilitation of cross-cultural education and international understanding. This is particularly the case as it involves China, a huge and important actor on the world stage, yet a society still largely inscrutable to most Western minds. The institute's direct financial and administrative links to the Chinese government do generate occasional concern. But almost none of the people interviewed for this report would do more than acknowledge the issues. They certainly haven't stopped local schools and universities across the country from welcoming the program into their classrooms in droves. There's even a waiting list.

Western iMedia's home state of Kentucky is a case in point. It currently hosts the second largest U.S. concentration of Confucius Institute visiting teachers. Only Georgia has more, and that lead might not last past this year. This is despite the fact that Kentucky's rank as one of the more conservative states in the country makes its people more likely than most to be skeptical of a communist government's initiatives. Western Kentucky University, where Western iMedia is based, administers most Confucius Institute activity in the state.

Launch the Layar app, available free at [get.layar.com](http://get.layar.com).  
Point your phone or tablet camera  
at the news panel to view video and other  
augmented reality parts of this report.



# SCHOOL

# 学校

"I think American Students have more activity, and I like this. They have ideas, and they want to express themselves. They want to share their experiences to everybody. They want to show themselves. I think this is very good."

Elaine Kong, visiting teacher, Olmstead Elementary, Ky

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING ABOUT OTHER CULTURES



**Lara Martin**

The deputy director for the Confucius Institute for Traditional Chinese Medicine at London South Bank University believes it is important for children to learn different languages and cultures so the next generation can come together more effectively than in the past.



**Pamela Abshire**

An associate professor of electrical and computer engineering within the Institute for Systems Research at the University of Maryland, College Park, she takes classes twice a week at the university's Confucius Institute to achieve one of her personal goals—to learn to communicate with others in Chinese.

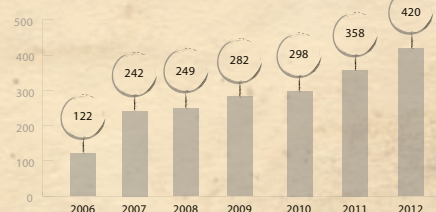
## U.S. EDUCATION CUTS



Despite nationwide budget cuts to education, the United States is still desperate for children to learn languages—especially those not currently taught in typical American classrooms. During the most recent Bush administration, government bureaus united in the push to educate students in Chinese and other languages such as Urdu, Arabic, Korean and Russian. Yet, figures from the Na-

tional Education Association show budget cuts for states across the board. Some, such as Texas and California, have lost over \$2 million this year. Susan Pertel Jain, the executive director of the UCLA Confucius Institute, said Confucius Institute programs help the United States to reach its goal, even in the face of budget cuts, by providing these services and the funding to finance them.

## Global increase in Institute locations



**\$13,000**

Maximum yearly Hanban contribution per teacher per Institute location

**18%** Percent of Americans who can speak only English

**53%** Percentage of Europeans that speak more than one language

**3 in 10** Number of Americans who cannot find China on a map



# SCHOOL

## Flexibility is a key requirement for Chinese teachers put in front of another country's classrooms

The purpose of the Confucius Institute is to spread China's language and culture to other countries. Yet the program's visiting teachers say they're the ones who get the culture lesson when they first arrive at their host schools. Despite their required prior experience before being accepted into the program, and then the additional professional training they get in Beijing before being sent overseas, it is hard to realistically prepare someone for the vast differences they will face in student discipline and interactivity.

A typical Chinese classroom is a relatively calm, quiet, crowded place compared to most other countries. Instructors generally lecture from the front of the room. Students mostly sit quietly throughout the lesson and rarely ask questions. And the average class size is 37, half again larger than in the typical American or British public school.

As Western iMedia's fusion journalists interviewed dozens of Confucius Institute visiting teachers throughout the United States and in London, Cape Town and Beijing about their experience with the program, a clear trend emerged. Almost all cited flexibility and adaptability as key requirements for the job. They all said they are constantly experimenting with new techniques to leverage their students' active, sometimes boisterous, often surprising classroom demeanor. And instead of delivering strict lessons, they said, it is often more about forming a relationship with the students.

Sheng-Huei Betty Yu, assistant director of education outreach for the Western Kentucky University Confucius Institute, said she and her counterparts at other branches of the program have started developing additional orientation training for their newly arriving visiting teachers. She said it is intended to more thoroughly prepare new staff for their initial face to face with a phalanx of American teens and pre-teens.

Launch the Layar app, available free at [get.layar.com](http://get.layar.com).  
Point your phone or tablet camera  
at the news panel to view video and other  
augmented reality parts of this report.



# TEACHER

# 老师

"When I came here, I found that all the kids in the world are the same. If you make the classes very interesting, they love to learn."

Chinese teacher Jinghua Chen

## IN THE CLASSROOM



### Jinghua Chen

For Jinghua Chen, a volunteer teacher with Perryville Elementary School in Perryville, Ky., his decision to spend a year in the United States teaching Chinese with the Confucius Institute came at a price. Since he left China, he has missed his daughter's first steps.



### Hongjie Chen

Hongjie Chen, a volunteer teacher working at Auburn Elementary School in Auburn, Ky., said the Confucius Institute is giving her the chance to do what she has always wanted to do — teach Chinese to non-native speakers.



### Samuel Tan

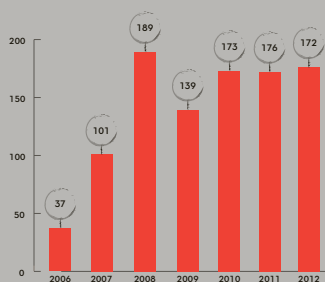
Samuel Tan is a volunteer teacher currently assigned to Woodlawn Elementary School in Danville, Ky. Tan said he enjoys teaching students and playing games with them in the classroom.

## IN THE UNITED STATES

The Chinese Guest Teacher Program in the United States is made possible through a partnership between the College Board and Hanban, China's Office of Chinese Language Council International. With classroom environments designed to enhance cultural appreciation, volunteer Chinese teachers serve K-12 schools and districts nationwide.

### PARTICIPATION IN THE CHINESE GUEST TEACHER PROGRAM:

Source: College Board/Chinese Language Institute



### GUEST TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS:



Chinese teaching certificate, licensed to teach in China



Bachelor's degree (or higher) in education, Chinese, English, international studies, or a related field.



Standard Mandarin (Putunghua) certificate



Three or more years of teaching experience

Visiting teachers may stay in the United States for up to three years, after which each teacher's J-1 visa expires.

# TEACHER

## Visiting teachers leave home, family and comfort to spread language and culture

Different motivations drive the Chinese who wind up in foreign classrooms teaching for the Confucius Institute. Some do it because they simply love teaching. Some do it out of pride in their country and culture. Some say they are contributing to greater global understanding. And some just always wanted to visit another country. They undergo a rigorous application, interview and training process before moving to their assigned country to teach for at least one year. Once there, they have to adjust to unusual classroom disciplines in addition to the customs of a different people.

Western iMedia interviewed nearly 50 visiting teachers, as they are called by the Confucius Institute, in preparing this coverage. Storybuilders, as we call our writers, and media producers with video expertise traveled to New Orleans, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., London, England, Cape Town, South Africa, and Beijing, China, as well as all over Kentucky to collect the teachers' personal stories. Amidst all the educational and political interests that surround the Confucius Institute, it would be easy to overlook the very human interests at the heart of the program. We felt it was essential.

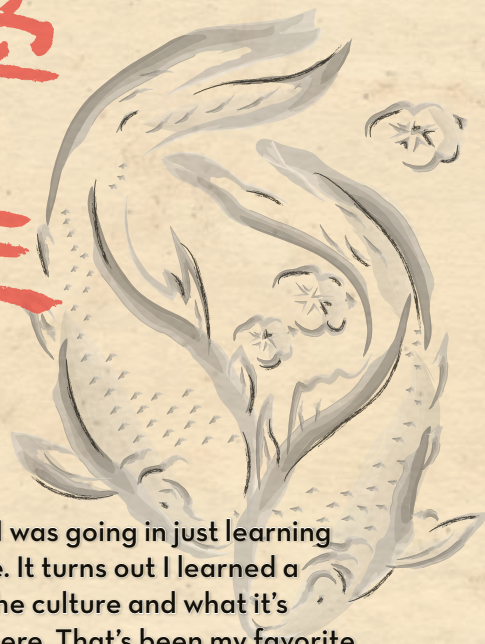
But interviewing the teachers was not entirely easy. First there was trying to squeeze into their busy classroom schedules, not to mention squeezing into their busy classrooms with all our equipment. Then there was the language barrier: While they are certainly expert Chinese speakers, some are still mastering English enunciation, which can make getting clear audio recordings a challenge. Although the children don't seem to have any problems understanding, so perhaps it was just our equipment. And then some topics were harder for them to talk about, especially when it came to the young children, new spouses and aging parents left behind in China and not seen for a long time.

Other than that, there was never any reluctance to answer any of our questions about any aspect of Confucius Institute or Chinese government policy. On the other hand, there seemed every eagerness to share their experiences and insights in comparing life at home with life in their temporarily adopted homes.

Launch the Layar app, available free at [get.layar.com](http://get.layar.com).  
Point your phone or tablet camera  
at the news panel to view video and other  
augmented reality parts of this story.



# STUDENT



"I thought I was going in just learning a language. It turns out I learned a lot about the culture and what it's like over there. That's been my favorite part of the class. I didn't think it would be so interactive."

**Amber Johnson, Greenwood High, Warren County, KY**

## CHINESE LEARNERS ASSESS THE DIFFICULTY



### Ella and Addison

Ella and Addison attend Woodlawn Elementary School in Danville, Ky, where they are in Samuel Tan's Confucius classroom. The students learn Chinese through songs, games and other activities.



### Pamela Abshire

The University of Maryland professor who is also a student at Maryland's Confucius Institute said learning to speak Chinese can be difficult for English speakers because of the specific tones involved. She said the Confucius Institute program makes her speak Chinese often, which helps her pronunciation.

## Student Survey

DO YOU LIKE THE CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE PROGRAM?

**82%** Yes  
**18%** No

HOW MUCH DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE LEARNED?

**55%** A lot  
**30%** Average  
**15%** Not much

WILL LEARNING CHINESE HELP YOU IN THE FUTURE?

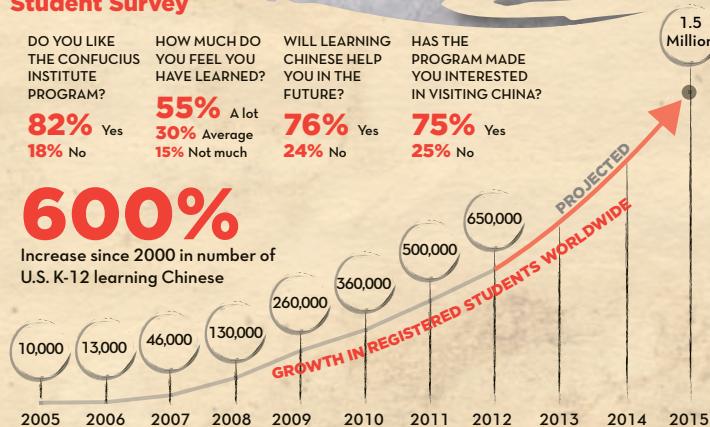
**76%** Yes  
**24%** No

HAS THE PROGRAM MADE YOU INTERESTED IN VISITING CHINA?

**75%** Yes  
**25%** No

# 600%

Increase since 2000 in number of U.S. K-12 learning Chinese



# STUDENT

Despite Chinese tonal complexity, students are signing up in record numbers to learn the language

Every statistic that profiles learners of Chinese, as well as Western iMedia's own survey of students in Confucius Classrooms on four continents, shows increasing and enthusiastic interest in studying the language. Research also finds the benefits to students may go beyond simply preparing the next generation to do business with the world's second-largest economy. They are being internationalized, coming to realize early that this is a multinational, multicultural planet. But Spanish or French would get you there, also. Instead, Chinese is what they are choosing, despite that it is often characterized as one of the most difficult languages to learn because it uses tonal inflections to differentiate words.

Chinese must be fun to learn because the students in every classroom that one of our media teams visited throughout 2012 and 2013 seemed to be having a great time. Frustration apparently was not in their new vocabulary.

To be sure, though, our journalists had every student they met complete a short survey about the Confucius Institute. Four out of five said they liked the program. Three-quarters said that they felt it would help them in the future and that it made them want to visit China some day. If the Chinese government's underlying reason for funding the program is to influence a favorable image with the world, it seems to be working. The complete survey results are on the Student news panel.

Some educators are turning to the Confucius Institute and its subsidized visiting teachers to replace some of the classes they have lost due to budget cuts during the current recession. In our interview with Hanban, however, indications were given that there may be changes in how teacher funding is provided in the future, with a greater emphasis on local Confucius Institutes becoming more financially self-supporting.

Launch the Layar app, available free at [get.layar.com](http://get.layar.com).  
Point your phone or tablet camera  
at the news panel to view video and other  
augmented reality parts of this report.





THANK YOU

谢 谢

## "Inside Confucius"

Reported in text, video, data, art,  
mobile and augmented reality  
by Western iMedia  
in partnership  
with Layar

© 2013 Western Kentucky University

Design support by

COLUMN FIVE SD  
SCHILLER

**WIM**  
WESTERN iMEDIA

The fusion journalists of Western iMedia combine the ethics, mission, production values and professionalism of quality editorial work with an atypical range of expertise in making that work more visible, more tangible, more accessible to a contemporary audience.

**layar**

An industry-leading company at the forefront of the rapidly emerging medium of augmented reality (AR). AR is a way of viewing digital information which has been superimposed – or augmented – onto a live view of the physical, real-world environment around you.

### WESTERN iMEDIA STAFF

**Anna Anderson**  
Senior UX Journalist  
Special Technologies

**Jake Boswell**  
Media Producer  
Special Technologies

**Stephanie Bronner**  
Social Journalist

**Gavin Ezell**  
Social Journalist

**Liz Geiman**  
Storybuilder

**Whitney Harper**  
Media Producer

**Cameron Kach**  
Storybuilder

**Whitney Koontz**  
Storybuilder

**Lauren Lorange**  
Senior Storybuilder

**Bria Logsdon**  
Senior UX Journalist/  
Storybuilder

**McKenzi Loid**  
Social Journalist

**Hannah Murphy**  
Executive Media Producer

**Kerry J. Northrup**  
iMedia Coordinator

**T.J. Parker**  
Media Producer/Storybuilder

**Jacqui Powell**  
Media Producer/Storybuilder

**Ethan Pugh**  
Media Producer

**Bethany Randall**  
UX Journalist

**Khristian Tate**  
Social Journalist

**Ryan Vennell**  
Media Producer

**Scott Vennell**  
UX Journalist/Media Producer

**Anna Williams**  
Senior Media Producer

### SPECIAL APPRECIATIONS

**Mark Simpson**, professor  
**Heather Garcia**, Imagewest  
**Loup Langton**, director  
**Maureen Wilk**, office associate  
**Kathy Williams**, office coordinator  
School of Journalism & Broadcasting  
Potter College of Arts & Letters  
**Western Kentucky University**

**Timothy Mullin**, director  
**Tony Thurman**, exhibits technician  
**Donna Parker**, exhibits curator  
**Kentucky Museum**

**Quintin Schevernels**, CEO  
**Layar**

**Alan Schneller**, artist/illustrator/designer  
**Schneller Design**

**Jason Lankow**, CEO/cofounder  
**Column Five Media**

**Dr. Wei-Ding Pan**, director  
**Betty Yu**, assistant director  
**Terrill Martin**, associate director  
**Xiao Yi**, calligrapher  
**WKU Confucius Institute**

**Hanban**  
and all the Confucius Institute staff in  
many locations who provide requested  
statistics and visit support

**Dr. Gary Ransdell**, president  
Honors College  
Office of Research (FUSE)  
Technology Resource Center  
**Western Kentucky University**

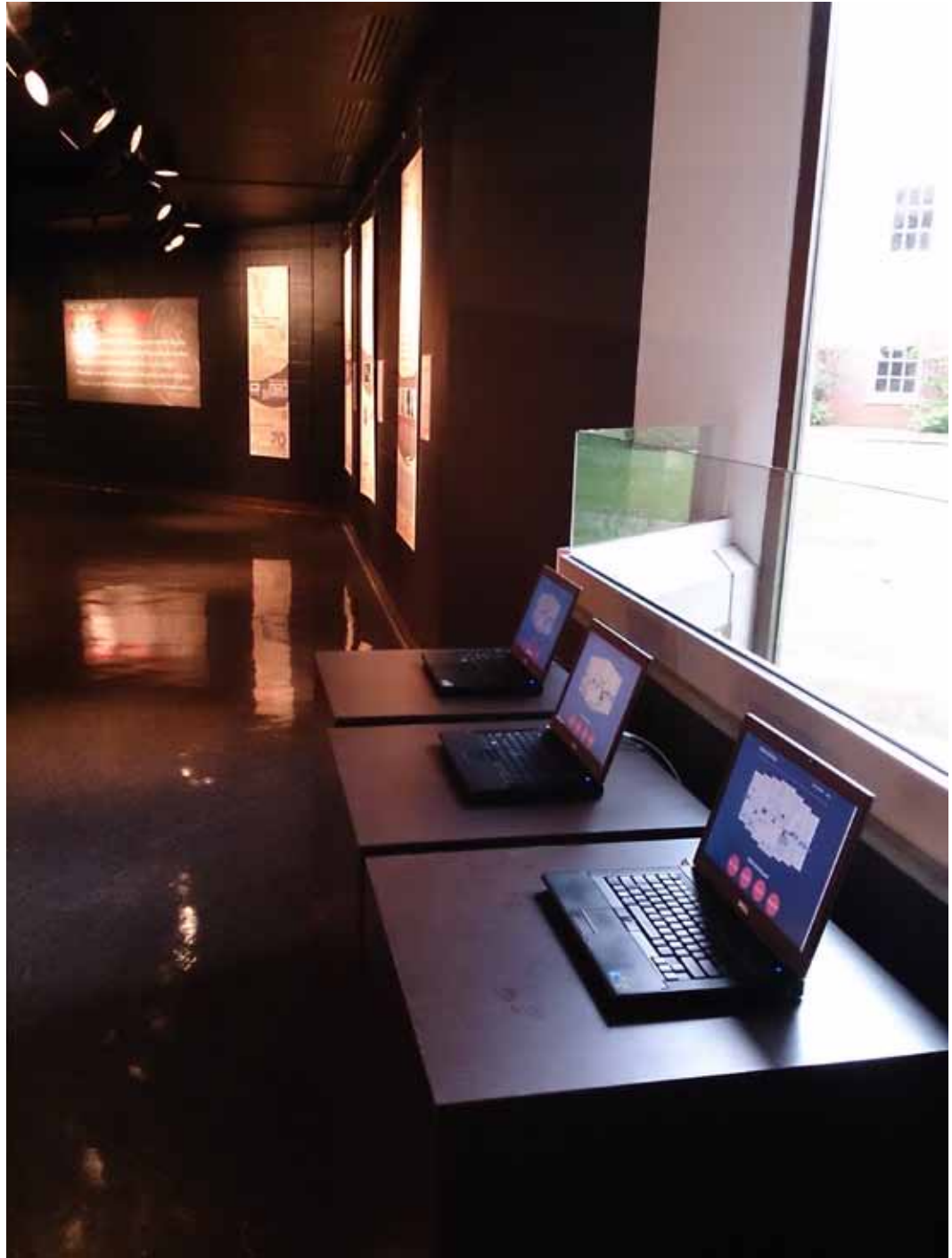
**Gerald Printing**

While existing Western iMedia with permission and access to  
requested resources and staff at no time in the production of this  
report did the Confucius Institute or Hanban have any editorial  
control or influence over any aspect of the project, nor was any  
funding provided by them. Western iMedia is solely responsible for the  
contents of this report.

[www.wkujournalism.com/madecconfucius](http://www.wkujournalism.com/madecconfucius)

Download app at getLayar.com to access digital content.















What interests you?

CHINESE CULTURE

SOFT POWER

EDUCATION

THE EXPERIENCE

## China

FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Confucius Institute called "the people of China's commitment to the world"**

May 6, 2013

Drawing its name from the ancient Chinese philosopher who emphasized government morality, sincerity, family loyalty and ancestor worship, the Confucius Institute is one of China's primary efforts to strike a chord with the rest of the world.



**Where two cultures meet**  
Yu Liu is a China native and graduate student at the London School of Economics. As part of her studies,...

April 24, 2013



**How the Confucius Institute functions**  
For the People's Republic of China, the Confucius Institute isn't just an investment—it's a commitment. In just a few short years, beginning in 2004, Confucius Institutes have appeared all over the world, with over 400 locations across more than 100 countries.

April 24, 2013



**The necessity of spreading Chinese culture**  
Hanbin Deputy Director Wang Yongli said the Confucius Institute program was started out of a need for the rest of the world to know more about the Chinese people and their culture. Now, 420 Confucius Institutes are spread throughout 111 countries.

April 24, 2013



## Confucius Institute called “the people of China’s commitment to the world”



Posted:

May 6, 2013

Comments: 0

Drawing its name from the ancient Chinese philosopher who emphasized government morality, sincerity, family loyalty and ancestor worship, the Confucius Institute is one of China’s primary efforts to strike a chord with the rest of the world. Its hundreds of language training and cultural exchange programs in more than 100 countries have little to do with the actual teachings of Confucius, but rather with his popularity abroad. He is one of the few universally well-known Chinese historical figures outside of Asia, and his teachings have broad appeal.

This section of “Inside Confucius” explains how China’s Confucius Institute is organized and how it works. It describes different forms the program can take, such as the Confucius Classroom foreign language classes in local schools using visiting Chinese teachers, and the research-based institutes that endow professors in cooperation with local universities. It is an essential foundation for the rest of the story.

While a lot of this information can be gathered from a variety of reference sources, journalists seek to make their reports more human, less sterile, by interviewing key people who can explain the nuances and answer questions. From the start of this project in the fall of 2012, that was Western iMedia’s approach. We particularly wanted the chance to interview a senior official of Hanban — the Confucius Institute headquarters in Beijing.

Then in mid-October, the American ABC News network broadcast a story on the Confucius Institute in Macon, Ga., that publicized some teaching materials unfattering to the United States. It was a minor controversy but Hanban started declining interview requests from any media for a while after that.

Our last chance would come in January 2013 when one of our iMedia teams traveled to Beijing to profile the training program that prepares visiting teachers to work around the world. With Hanban’s offices just down the road, they also requested an interview but arrived in China without any confirmation. And then at the last moment, Wang Yongli, deputy director of Hanban and the Office of Chinese Language Council International, opened his door to us and hugely expanded the story. One of his quotes became the headline for this storyboard.

Search from the blog ...

SEARCH

## LEAVE A COMMENT

Name (required)

Email (required)

Website

Your Comment

You may use these [HTML](#) tags and attributes: <a href="" title=""> <abbr title=""> <acronym title=""> <b> <blockquote cite=""> <code> <del datetime=""> <em> <i> <q cite=""> <s> <strong>

POST COMMENT

☐ Notify me of follow-up comments by email.

☐ Notify me of new posts by email.

## Where two cultures meet



Search from this blog...

SEARCH



### Where two cultures meet

Posted: April 24, 2013  
Comments: 0

Yu Liu is a China native and graduate student at the London School of Economics. As part of her studies, she tutors high-profile business professionals from London's bustling economic sector.

## Full Size Panels

Click on an image to view the full size panel.



## How the Confucius Institute functions






## How the Confucius Institute functions

Published April 24, 2013  
Comments 2

**F**or the People's Republic of China, the Confucius Institute isn't just an investment—it's a commitment.

In just a few short years, beginning in 2004, Confucius Institutes have appeared all over the world, with over 400 institutes across more than 100 countries.

The goal of the Confucius Institute and its partner, an organization directly affiliated with China's Ministry of Education, is to introduce the world about Chinese language and culture and contribute to the development of multiculturalism and the building of a harmonious world.

"China has an economic giant suddenly appears in front of the world, and everybody is shocked," said Wang Yong, deputy director of Harbin. "People want to know the history...and the future of the giant."

And China is spending no expense to make sure the giant is well understood. The exact budget for the Confucius Institute project is unknown, but it is estimated to be anywhere between \$10 million and \$100 million annually.

China pays the initial setup costs and for the first several years provides funds for newly started Confucius Institutes. Annual budgets for the institutes vary, but it is estimated the People's Republic spends between \$10,000 and \$200,000 per institute. Newly formed institutes are expected to be self-sufficient within their first five years.

The ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius from which the institute draws its name should ring a bell for many, and it's no surprise China selected the institute to bear his name.

Confucius lived over 2,000 years ago. His teachings and philosophy with their emphasis on personal and governmental morality, loyalty, family, and ancestor worship would lead to the formation of the early over religion, Confucianism.

Confucius Institute, in truth, have little to do with the religious and philosophical teachings of Confucius, but rather the philosophy itself. He is one of the few Chinese historical figures well known outside of Asia, and his teachings have found universal appeal.

Confucius Institutes are most commonly made possible through partnerships between Chinese and foreign universities, initiated by Harbin.

No other type of Confucius Institute has been, one claiming a local group to operate an institute under a licensing agreement by the Harbin Working Headquarters and another option in which the institute is fully owned and operated by Harbin Headquarters.

In the most common form, a local director and a Chinese director, usually sent from the Chinese partner university, manage the institute, with the local partner managing most of the day-to-day operations. The Chinese director maintains contact with Harbin.

"We don't put our own centers in and our own directors to manage the program," Wang said. "We adopted the cooperation, as Confucius Institute program is a bridge cooperation and Chinese university, one foreign university, and Confucius Institute headquarters. We trust each other. The local people know what they need."

Teachers are trained and sent by Chinese partner universities to students from home to teach Chinese language and Chinese culture to Chinese students.

Alongside Confucius Institutes, the Chinese government is also establishing Confucius Classrooms throughout the world to teach Mandarin Chinese. The goal in the United States alone, there will be Confucius Classrooms in approximately 100 elementary, middle and high schools across 10 states, each including one or more trained teachers from China and jointly paid for by the Chinese government.

It's an opportunity many universities and schools in times of economic hardship and budget cuts can't in good sense refuse.

Ben Kington, principal of Orlow Elementary School in Orlow, Ky., said Confucius Classrooms provides an opportunity that is simply too good to pass up and all at this cost to the school.

"Being out in here in rural southern Logan County, we don't have a lot of exposure to other ethnic groups. We are pretty much all white," Kington said. "It's been very good for the students to see, to introduce them to another part of the world. China is very different from Kentucky...it's been good culturally."

But some schools choose to pass up offers for low-cost Chinese language courses taught by highly qualified Chinese educators for fear of potential students concerning the use of Chinese propaganda.

What makes Confucius Institutes, in many ways similar to other cultural exchange programs such as the United States Fulbright Program, stand apart is the relationship between the Chinese government and foreign universities.

Fulbright Grants and other cultural exchange programs like them all function around agreements between grant and host governments. China bypasses this, instead signing agreements directly with individual foreign universities.

A foreign government doesn't offer to spend millions of dollars building a cultural center with another country's border without a purpose and it's the purpose that raises concern among opponents of the Confucius Institute.

It's no secret China, now a major world economic power, is looking to brighten its image abroad from the ground level up.

"The Confucius Institute program is the Chinese people's commitment to the world, that our world is getting better and better," Wang said. "Not this, you see, when we have understanding, and only through mutual understanding can we set up mutual trust. With mutual trust, we can cooperate and exchange more."

From a small town, rural Kentucky classroom to some of the most prestigious universities in the world, the Confucius Institute is making connections and spreading Chinese culture with all its benefits and controversy attached.

## Project Brief/Editorial Plan

### Inside the Confucius Institute

#### Print/digital narrative in infographic banners with layered-video/interactives

## Story

### **"Culture and Politics in Teaching Chinese"** (working title)

This project will give its audience a multifaceted and detailed look inside the Confucius Institute.

CI is a program directly funded by the Chinese government that provides teachers and resources for teaching Chinese language and culture in local schools and colleges around the globe.

At a time of increased pressure on school budgets and instructional standards, supporters value the program's encouragement and facilitation of cross-cultural education and international understanding. This is particularly the case as it involves China, a huge and important actor on the world stage, yet a society still largely inscrutable to most Western minds. However, CI's direct links to the Chinese government have also generated everything from cautious concern to open suspicion to outright rejection of the program. Its critics are concerned that CI is a propaganda tool being given unprecedented access to young and impressionable minds, and a barely camouflaged financial enticement to academic self-censorship.



In the middle of this debate over politics, policy, academic freedom and educational opportunity are the young volunteer Chinese teachers, experiencing life outside their own country often for the first time, and their local students, the world's next generation of decision-makers for whom an international perspective is increasingly vital.

More than 300 CIs operate worldwide, with nearly a quarter of those in the United States, and with the largest U.S. concentration of CI-funded native Chinese instructors living and teaching in Kentucky. KY's status in this regard is particularly novel since it is ranked as one of the more conservative states in the country, therefore more likely than most to be skeptical of a communist government's initiatives. Western Kentucky University, with the motto "A Leading American University with International Reach," administers most CI activity in the state.

The narrative for this complicated and multifaceted story comprises two primary elements.

- The facts, numbers, maps, lists, statistics and examples combine to characterize the scale and nature of CI at various levels from international to national to state to individual community. The storytelling needs to engage audience members in visualizing and grasping the otherwise overwhelming data, for them to derive context and informed opinion.
- Then there are the experiences, emotions, viewpoints and interpretations of the people involved with and affected by CI activities. The storytelling here needs to engage audience members in connecting with these people as directly as possible, for them to assemble a familiarity and personal perspective most would otherwise not be in a position to achieve.

## Audience

Interest in this story will be international in scope and particularly strong where there are the most CI programs — Europe (100), North America (88) and Asia (73) — plus anyone interested in China, Chinese and Chinese culture. That the story will be produced in English will also trend the audience predominantly among English-using locations.

The American audience is likely to be the most personally engaged because of the concentration of CI programs in American schools and universities, resulting in a concentration of project content from U.S. sources.



Beyond geographic focus, the wide span of issues touched on by the story will engage audiences interested in primary, secondary and higher education; foreign language instruction; education funding; teacher training and certification; student intercultural experiences; social internationalization; foreign policy and international relations; Chinese government policies; human rights; soft power; university initiatives and grant opportunities; academic freedom and integrity; local school board and community governance; school administration; parenting and child development.

The personal stories of the Chinese visiting teachers and of the communities in which they live and teach will engage audiences on many levels of human interest.

Some of the audience will come at the story with established mindsets about various issues. Points of entry to the project must anticipate the more polarizing of these mindsets to still encourage engagement and further exploration of the broader story.

In addition, the innovative format being used to tell this story will engage audiences interested in media technology, the future of journalism, the future of infographics and data visualization, the future of print media, and developments in augmented reality, video storytelling and mobile interactivity.

## Media

In cooperation with world-class data-visualization design firm Column Five Media of Orange County in the United States and augmented-reality technology pioneer Layar of Amsterdam, Netherlands, Western iMedia will produce this project in a non-traditional multiplatform journalistic format conceived specifically to tell the story to greatest effect in light of its primary narrative elements.

The project will comprise a series of perhaps 12 to 20 visually enticing, intuitively explanatory infographic banners/posters digitally overlaid with mobile-accessed video articles providing increased depth of explanation and emotional context. The augmented-reality (AR) overlay technology is accessed through a camera-linked smartphone or tablet app that will also allow interactive features promoting dynamic audience engagement.

Each infographic will present one segment of the story, such as the organization and finances of CI worldwide; CI comparison to other national cultural outreach programs; the basics of teaching the Chinese language and popular elements of Chinese culture; encapsulated profiles of selected CI programs, their practitioners and their host communities in a variety of locations in Kentucky, the United States and internationally; the evolution of direct and indirect soft power and cultural influence; an overview of Chinese policies and people's attitudes toward them; trends in foreign language skills in America and other societies; comparison data on academic achievement vs. language learning nationally and in the CI communities; the training process for CI visiting teachers at the program's boot camp outside Beijing; etc.

The video articles keyed to sections of each infographic will document the stories and views of individuals related to the topic of that banner, such as a CI visiting teacher in the highlighted community, a student in one of the local school's CI classes, the student's parents, a host community leader or host university scholar with a representative viewpoint on the program, local officials charged with teacher licensing and curriculum development, CI officials at various levels, etc.



## Engagement

All the content of this project will additionally be accessible through a specially developed online site that presents the story's information and video material in a non-linear, explorable and searchable environment that is HTML5 compliant and adaptive to mobile and tablet devices as well as computer users.

However, beyond the essential journalistic objective of advancing the informed society, this project's goal is to not just tell the story but to create an experience for its audience, to create a higher level of engagement than is typical in today's news media. That requires more than just another website or mobile app, no matter how sophisticated.

It is toward that end that this story's primary vehicle purposefully leverages the power of print and paged design in terms of impact, persistence, perceived veracity, organic navigation and a low tech-threshold for

initial audience participation. The infographic banners will be objects of art in their own right, piquing interest and communicating on a visceral level even before people get close enough to consume specific information content. The banners will achieve marvelous effect assembled in a designed gallery presentation for particularly interested audiences, but can also work journalistically simply arranged down the middle of a shopping mall promenade for serendipitous audiences. They can be reproduced on demand, from billboard size down to inkjet-printed notebook pages, in whole or in parts, and still function to trigger the augmented-reality overlays.

The overlay technology accessed through ubiquitous personal mobile devices takes these infographics to a whole new level they could not otherwise attain without limiting confinement to a digital screen. It makes them actively engaging beyond just being read. It allows them to be continually updated, overcoming print's most inherent weakness as a news medium. And it lets this project augment the power of print with the power of video for its ability to time- and place-shift viewers, communicate emotion and occupy a full range of attention.

Social media will be employed, both in traditional means and through overlaid interactives on the infographics, to generate and engage audience for the story and build community around it. This will especially include integration of user-generated content into the project.

A Kickstarter.com campaign will be used not only to help fund the project but also as a component of audience generation.

### Budget and funding

A \$19,500 budget has been established for the project to cover basic editorial work, audience interactivity and production expenses. The Kickstarter.com crowdfunding platform is being used to seek underwriters for these costs. Beyond this, primary funding is from Western iMedia's own resources through the Western Kentucky University School of Journalism & Broadcasting. In addition, both project partners, Column Five Media and Layar, are contributing in-kind services totaling around \$12,000. The Confucius Institute is not involved in any way in funding this project.

### Editorial standards

CI officials were approached in August 2012 for initial discussions concerning access, cooperation, editorial independence and journalistic ethics. Just as funding of this project is totally independent of the Confucius Institute, CI will have no authority over its content and will be afforded no prior review other than at the discretion of Western iMedia for fact-checks and quote verification. CI has agreed to issue the necessary documents to support Chinese visa applications.

### Updated

2012.12.05

# Inside Confucius

## Mar/Apr/May 2013



Explore the Confucius Institute via innovative journalism that fuses modern-infographic designs with augmented-reality technology.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 Short video	30
31	1	2	3	4	5 Long video Exhibit plan Panels designed Text completed	6
7	8	9 WKUCI preview	10	11	12 Mobile site Layar completed Panels produced	13
14	15 Flex week	16 Flex week	17 Flex week	18 Flex week	19 Flex week	20 Exhibit setup
21 Exhibit setup	22 Exhibit open Exhibit tuning	23 Exhibit tuning	24 Exhibit tuning Presentation	25	26	27 Depart INMA In NYC
28 In NYC	29 In NYC	30 In NYC	1 Return INMA	2	3 Exhibit close	4

April 5: Content  
complete

April 5: **Preview**

April 12: Mobile site  
complete

April 20-21: **Exhibit  
setup**

April 22: Exhibit open

May 3: **Exhibit close**

## Bibliography

- Anderson, Kevin. "Increasing Reader Engagement through Better Journalism Experiences." *MDIF Knowledge Bridge*. Media Development Investment Fund, 13 Sept. 2012. Web. 10 Feb. 2013.
- Carliner, Saul. "Modeling Information for Three-Dimensional Space: Lessons Learned from Museum Exhibit Design." *Technical communication*, 48(1), 66-81. 2001.
- Dindler, Christian, and Ole Sejer Iversen. "Motivation in the Museum – Mediating between Everyday Engagement and Cultural Heritage." Center for Digital Urban Living, n.d. Web. 2009.
- Jenkins, Joanna, Rochelle L. Ford, and Sheryl Oliver. "A Millennial Perspective on Diversity and Multiculturalism." American Advertising Federation, n.d. Web. 2011-2012.
- Lord, Barry, and Gail Dexter Lord. *The Manual of Museum Exhibitions*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2002. Print.
- Pitman, Bonnie, and Ellen Hirzy. *Ignite the Power of Art: Advancing Visitor Engagement in Museums*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010. Print.
- Russell, Robert L. "Designing Exhibits that Engage Visitors: Bob's Top Ten Points." [http://exs.exploratorium.edu/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/design\\_points.pdf](http://exs.exploratorium.edu/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/design_points.pdf)